

BOARD OF ABATEMENT MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 16, 2020 6:30 p.m, via Zoom

Present: Selectboard members Richard Baker, Christopher Martin, and Laurie Colgan; Town Clerk Bobbi Brimblecombe; Listers Kathleen Hayes and Michele Gonzales; Justices Chris Bellamy, Judy Henkin, Ellen Halperin

At 5:30 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Chair Chris Bellamy

Bobbi confirmed that the hearing was warned as required by law.

Mr. Cliche took the oath.

His grounds for abatement – inability to pay.

He testified that he has a medical issue that has prevented him from working. He hates asking for help but he hasn't had any income for several months. He has always paid his taxes on time but the loss of income and the hospital bills have drained him. If his treatments are successful he will go back to work in February, and if they don't work, he has life insurance for his family, so there will be no issues for paying the taxes in the future.

Dan Mulligan took the oath.

His grounds for abatement – manifest error of the listers

He testified that there were 20 acres taxable and 2 acres not taxable, but over time the church and school activities have expanded to encompass another 3 acres, so 17 acres should be taxable rather than 20. He has a map that shows the area of their development.

Lister Hayes stated that this isn't part of the abatement because they agree and they will adjust when they do their new appraisals. It's a current change that they can make.

Kate asked why it took so long to bring the discrepancy to light. It started in 2006 but there have been 13 tax notices and 7 change of appraisal notices in the past years and the error was not brought to the listers' attention.

Dan explained that he has calculated the overpayment to be close to \$22,000. Bobbi's calculations agree – she calculated the amount of the overpayment to be \$ 21,785.64.

Bobbi explained that because of the unique situation, the value of the non-taxable property is subtracted from the total value of the property. As the total value of the property increased through development, the amount that was subtracted did not get increased as it should have been.

Dan explained that the bill was paid without looking into it closely and it wasn't obvious to the treasurer that the bill was increased.

Kate indicated that there were mistakes on both sides and the taxpayer has a duty to be on top of things and that is why notices are sent. Dan asked whether the Listers were aware of the mistake.

After the appellant left the meeting, Judy Henkin raised the issue of whether the listers were testifying or asking questions. Kate feels that she was asking questions rather than testifying.

At 7:05 p.m, Rich moved, Chris Martin seconded to go into deliberative session. All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Bobbi Brimblecombe, Town Clerk

The foregoing is a true copy of the Minutes of the September 16, 2020 Board of Abatement Meeting.
A True Record. Attest, _____, Town Clerk
